

CLAIMS

1. A communication system, comprising:

a screen adapted to display a subject, the screen having a posture adapted to be controlled by the subject; and

a camera adjacent to the screen, the camera being adapted to allow the subject to view a desired location;

wherein when the camera is trained on the desired location, a gaze of the subject displayed by the screen appears substantially directed at the desired location.

2. The communication system of claim 1, wherein the desired location includes a selected participant.

3. The communication system of claim 3, wherein the selected participant is one of a person, a second screen, a telephone, an intercom, a video camera, a videoconferencing system, an audio recording device, and an audio/video recording device.

4. The communication system of claim 1, wherein the screen is sized such that at least a portion of the subject including a face can be displayed at substantially full scale.

5. The communication system of claim 1, further comprising:

at least one speaker for reproducing remote sounds from a remote location so that the remote sounds are audible at the desired location.

6. The communication system of claim 1, further comprising:

at least one microphone for detecting sounds at the desired location so that the sounds at the desired location can be communicated to the subject.

7. The communication system of claim 6, further comprising:

a remote terminal for displaying an image captured by the camera to the subject; and

a control arrangement connected with the remote terminal including:

a means for controlling the posture of the screen, thereby controlling a field of view of the camera.

8. The communication system of claim 7, further comprising:

at least one remote speaker connected with the remote terminal for reproducing sounds audible at a selectable proximity to the desired location so that the sounds are audible to the subject.

9. The communication system of claim 7, further comprising:

at least one remote microphone connected with the remote terminal for detecting remote sounds produced by the subject so that the remote sounds can be reproduced by the at least one speaker.

10. The communication system of claim 7, wherein the means for controlling the posture is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a keyboard, a joystick, a touch screen, and a touchpad.

11. The communication system of claim 7 wherein the control arrangement further includes:

a means for zooming the camera so that the subject can adjust a field of view of the camera.

12. The communication system of claim 11, wherein the means for zooming is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a joystick, a keyboard, a touch screen, and a touchpad.

13. The communication system of claim 7, wherein the control arrangement further includes:

a means for communicating a nonverbal gesture.

14. The communication system of claim 13, wherein the means for communicating a nonverbal gesture is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a keyboard, a joystick, a touch screen, and a touchpad.

15. The communication system of claim 13, wherein the nonverbal gesture is at least one of a nod performed by the screen to indicate a positive response and a shake performed by the screen to indicate a negative response.

16. The communication system of claim 13, wherein the nonverbal gesture is text displayed on the screen.

17. The communication system of claim 7, wherein the at least one microphone is a microphone array adapted to identify a direction of origin of a sound.

18. The communication system of claim 17, wherein the remote viewer provides a visual indication of the direction of origin of a sound to the subject.

19. The communication system of claim 17, wherein the remote viewer provides an audible indication of the direction of origin of a sound to the subject.

20. A system to facilitate conferencing, comprising:

a means for displaying a subject; and

a camera adapted to allow the subject to view a selected target of attention;

wherein an attitude of the means for displaying is adapted to be controlled by the subject.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the camera has a field of view centered at a position along an axis projecting from the means for displaying, the axis being perpendicular to a plane formed by the means for displaying.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the position approximates a typical distance between the means for displaying and a location of a target of attention such that when the camera is trained on a selected target of attention a gaze of the subject displayed by the means for displaying appears substantially directed at the selected target of attention.

23. A communication device, comprising:

a means for displaying a subject; and

a camera adjacent to the means for displaying, the camera being fixedly connected with the means

for displaying;

wherein an attitude of the camera is substantially similar to an attitude of the means for displaying;

wherein the attitude of the means for displaying is adapted to be controlled by the subject.

24. A system to facilitate communication between a subject and at least one participant, comprising:

a screen adapted to display the subject, the screen having a posture adapted to be controlled by

the subject; and

a camera adjacent to the screen the camera being adapted to allow the subject to view a selected

participant;

wherein when the camera is trained on the selected participant a gaze of the subject displayed by

the screen appears substantially directed at the selected participant;

wherein the selected participant can be a local participant or a representation of a remote participant.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the screen is sized such that at least a portion of the subject including a face can be displayed at close to actual size.

26. The system of claim 24, further comprising:

at least one speaker for reproducing remote sounds communicated by the subject so that the remote sounds are audible to the at least one participant.

27. The system of claim 24, further comprising:

at least one microphone for detecting sounds at the desired location so that the sounds at the desired location can be communicated to the subject.

28. The system of claim 27, further comprising:

a remote terminal for displaying an image captured by the camera to the subject; and

a control arrangement connected with the remote terminal including:

a means for controlling the posture of the screen, thereby controlling a field of view of the camera.

29. The system of claim 28, further comprising:
at least one remote speaker connected with the remote terminal for reproducing sounds audible at a selectable proximity to the selected participant so that the sounds are audible to the subject.
30. The system of claim 28, further comprising:
at least one remote microphone connected with the remote terminal for detecting remote sounds produced by the subject so that the remote sounds can be reproduced by the at least one speaker.
31. The system of claim 28, wherein the means for controlling the posture is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a keyboard, a joystick, a touch screen, and a touchpad.
32. The system of claim 28, wherein the control arrangement further includes:
a means for zooming the camera so that the subject can adjust a field of view of the camera.
33. The system of claim 32, wherein the means for zooming is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a joystick, a keyboard, a touch screen, and a touchpad.
34. The system of claim 28 wherein the control arrangement further includes:
a means for communicating a nonverbal gesture.

35. The system of claim 34, wherein the means for communicating a nonverbal gesture is at least one of a plurality of buttons, a keyboard, a joystick, a touch screen, and a touchpad.
36. The system of claim 34, wherein the nonverbal gesture is at least one of a nod performed by the screen to indicate a positive response and a shake performed by the screen to indicate a negative response.
37. The system of claim 34, wherein the nonverbal gesture is text displayed on the screen.
38. The system of claim 28, wherein the at least one microphone is a microphone array adapted to identify a direction of origin of a sound.
39. The system of claim 38, wherein the remote viewer provides a visual indication of the direction of origin of a sound to the subject.
40. The system of claim 38, wherein the remote viewer provides an audible indication of the direction of origin of a sound to the subject.
41. A method for conducting a conference, comprising:
activating a remote terminal for displaying a desired location to a subject at a remote location;
activating a device for displaying the subject to the desired location;

displaying the subject such that a substantially full scale image appears on the device; positioning the device such that a gaze of the subject appears substantially directed at a first desired location and the first desired location is displayed on the remote terminal; and repositioning the device at a command of one of the subject or a participant at the conference such that a gaze of the subject appears substantially directed at a second desired location and the second desired location is displayed on the remote terminal.

42. The method of claim 41, further comprising:

detecting sounds from the desired location;
reproducing sounds from the desired location to the remote location;
detecting sounds at the remote location; and
reproducing sounds from the remote location to the desired location.